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Laura D. Buchanan



CHIEF SEALTH

S O U V E N I R
OF * * * * *
CHIEF SEATTLE
AND * * * * *
PRINCESS ANGELINE

GLEANED FROM
INDIAN TRADITIONS
and HISTORIC RECORDS
of PUGET SOUND

By LAURA D. BUCHANAN

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Hidden in the midst of a clump of trees and bushes nestles the Indian graveyard of the Port Madison Reservation, in one corner of which is found the grave of Sealth, the Indian chieftain for whom the city of Seattle is named. Marked by a simple marble slab, he sleeps quietly, with the songs of the birds overhead and the murmur of the waves at his feet, within the shadow of the great city whose founders owe so much to his friendship.

Sealth, or Seattle as he was commonly called, was descended from a line of chieftains from both parents, Chief "Schwebe" of the Suquamish tribe being his father, and "Scholitza," daughter of a Duwamish chief, being his mother.

As to the place of birth of Sealth there seems to be some controversy, it being claimed by some that he was born on one of the hunting grounds of the tribe, while others claim he was born in the "Old-Man-House," a large building about one thousand feet in length by sixty in width, built of logs and split planks, which was divided into numerous apartments by solid partitions of the same crudely manufactured lumber, in which dwelt the chief and sub-chiefs of the allied tribes, and where they also held their councils.

This huge structure was located on Bainbridge Island, across from Magnolia Bluff, and resembled nothing so much as a human bee-hive, a primitive type of the more modern "Flat Building" or "Apartment House" so much in vogue by our more civilized people of today. It has long since fallen into decay, only the buried portion of the posts which supported the structure being left.

Here, in happy freedom, fishing and hunting, or participating in the games of his companions, he grew to manhood, strong of limb, dignified, brave and noted for his wisdom and prowess, as the following legend will show:

Rumors having been brought to the allied tribes of an impending attack upon the "Old-Man-House" by the mountain Indians, the chiefs called a council to determine upon the best way of repulsing the attack. After a prolonged discussion young Chief Sealth arose and said he believed he could defeat the enemy if he could have the assistance of some of the young warriors, who immediately crowded around him offering their services.

Learning that the attacking party was coming down one of the rivers (probably the White River), Sealth and his young men ascended the stream to a point where it made an abrupt bend. Here, after hours of labor, using the primitive axes of the redmen, they succeeded in felling a tree across the stream

in such a manner that the trunk rested on either bank while the branches swept the water, forming an impassable barrier.

Hardly was this accomplished and the young warriors secreted along the banks than scouts brought word to Sealth of the approach of the hostile band, and in a short time could be heard the splash of the paddles as the heavily laden canoes came swiftly around the bend, only to be caught among the branches and capsized, which was the signal for an attack from the shores, which proved so disastrous that the enemy was totally routed, while Sealth and his braves escaped unharmed.

For this achievement he was made chief of the allied tribes, which title he held at the time of his death, being considered by his people the grandest "Tyee" (Chief) of them all.

Sealth was married twice, his first wife dying soon after the birth of "Kickisomlo," or Princess Angeline, as she was later called.

His second wife left several children, some of whose descendants are still living, but there seems to be no record of the names of his wives, or the tribes to which they belonged.

When Sealth learned a city was to be named in his honor he objected strongly, even going to Olympia to protest against it, his objections being based upon an Indian super-

stition that the dead could not rest in their graves if their names were spoken after death.

The inscription upon his tombstone is as follows:

"Sealth, Chief of the Suquamish and allied tribes, died June 7, 1866.

"The firm friend of the whites and for whom the city of Seattle was named by its founders.

"Baptismal name, Noah Seattle, aged probably about eighty years."



THE GRAVE OF SEALTH

PRINCESS ANGELINE.

“Kickisomlo,” or Princess Angeline, the eldest daughter of Chief Sealth, was born about 1810 or 1811, in or near the “Old-Man-House,” where she grew to womanhood, happy and free from care, roaming the forests or swiftly skimming the waters of the Sound in her light canoe, as the fancy took her.

Scarcely of medium height, slender and graceful, the daughter of a noted chieftain, she was wooed by many of the young chiefs of neighboring tribes, but in vain, she having bestowed her affections upon a young man of her father’s tribe named Martin, who, though noted for his bravery and dignified bearing in the councils, was not the son of a chief. Knowing their attachment would not meet with the approval of her father, they hid it deep in their hearts, only meeting for an occasional walk in the forest, or, stealing away, pass an hour or two floating gently upon the waves in their light canoe, with only the stars to listen to their words of love.

At such times it was Angeline’s wont to keep her lover posted as to the affairs of the tribe, telling him what to say in the councils,

hoping he might, by his words of wisdom, win the approbation of her father. But tradition tells us her efforts were in vain and she was promised in marriage to a Snoqualmie chief at a meeting of the allied tribes.

On learning of this Angeline was grief-stricken and leaving Chief Sealth's presence rushed down to the beach where her lover's canoe was usually moored, and seeing what she supposed was the form of her lover sitting therein, she threw herself face downward in the boat and sobbed out her story. Swiftly the boat sped over the water under the quick stroke of the paddle, but no loving word was uttered to cheer her aching heart. Raising her head to ascertain the cause of the unusual silence what was her dismay to find herself not in the canoe of Martin, but instead in that of a French-Canadian trapper named Henri, who had often sought her good graces. Unheeding her entreaties to return, he kept on his way toward what is now the Canadian boundary, where he landed, taking her into the interior where she was unknown and friendless.

Here she dwelt for about twelve years, sometimes being well-treated and again being ill-treated and abused, bearing all with the stoicism of the women of her race.

When Henri finally lost his life in a stabbing affray during a drunken brawl, leaving her free to do as she chose, the longing for



PRINCESS ANGELINE

her girlhood home, so long suppressed, swept over her. She longed for the soft whispering of the wind among the trees, to hear again the lapping of the waves as they gently broke on the beach. Eagerly she made preparations and when all was ready, taking her only surviving child, a young daughter, she started on her tedious journey, unheeding the many dangers that threatened her, reaching her destination after many weeks of privation and weary travel.

Her return was like one risen from the dead, as it had long been supposed she had perished in the Sound when weeks and months lengthened into years and she did not return and no trace of her was found.

Entering her father's house unannounced she presented him with a pipe as a peace-offering, and explaining her absence, asked that she and her child might become inmates of his home. The old chief listened in silence, his kindly voice alone betraying emotion as he bade them stay.

Just at this time Martin, who had become a noted warrior, entered and perceiving Angeline, a look of surprise and amazement spread over his face, which quickly gave place to anger as his gaze fell upon her daughter, and he commenced to reproach and revile her, ending his tirade with a cruel blow in the face, ere the stern rebuke of Chief Sealth

could prevent it. She made no outcry; her immovable face betrayed no emotion. Quietly she took up the duties of her father's home. Her daughter grew to womanhood and became the wife of a white man, whose ill treatment of her caused her to take her own life. It appears to be an established fact that Angeline married again and bore other children, but as to the date of her husband's death there seems to be no record.

It is, however, certain that when the first white settlement was made on the present site of the city of Seattle, in the early fifties, she and her father were living on the island and many acts of kindness are recounted of both Chief Sealth and Angeline, their friendship for the whites lasting to the time of their death.

It was on this island that Chiefs Leschi and Claycum, at the head of hostile Indians, sought Chief Sealth and endeavored to induce him to turn against the whites and exterminate them. This they were unable to do, and fearing Chief Sealth might warn the whites of their danger he and his warriors were not permitted to leave the island, although the women were allowed to go and come as they pleased.

The tradition has been handed down, and is still believed by many residents of the "Queen City," that Chief Sealth, realizing the necessity of warning the whites, devised



CHIEF SEATTLE'S HOME

the plan of sending Angeline and another Indian woman named Hattie, who left their homes late at night, stealing through the darkness, sometimes creeping on hands and knees through the thickets and marshes, reaching the settlement in time to enable the inhabitants to seek safety in the blockhouse. Other reports, however, are to the effect that the foregoing is a myth; that an Indian named "Curly Jim" brought word to the whites.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that the saving of the settlement from massacre was undoubtedly due to the friendship of Chief Sealth and his people, and the pioneers never ceased to be grateful for that friendship, leaving no act or deed undone to show their appreciation.

The last years of Angeline's life were spent in her cabin home, which was located in that part of Seattle known as "Shanty-town," so long a reproach to the city. She spent most of her time in the tireless watch of the sea, which seemed to soothe and comfort her. It seemed to bring back the days when her father was great and powerful, when she was loved and honored, and none can tell whether there lingered a thought of regret as she recalled the past.

Her life had been an eventful one. She had watched her native forests give way for the growth of a great and flourishing city,

whose miles of railway, busy marts, schools, churches and beautiful homes made it indeed the metropolis of the northwest.

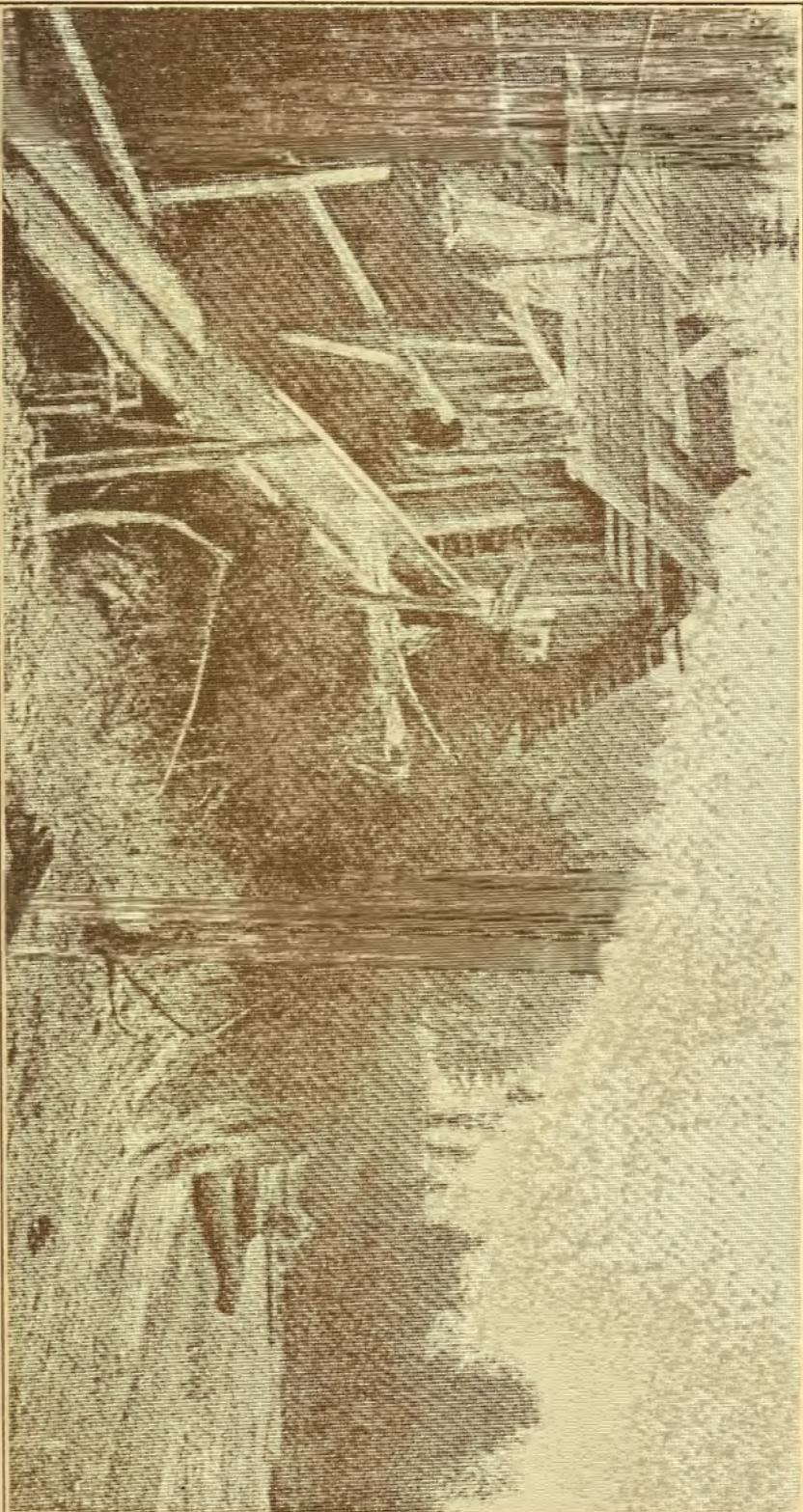
She had watched the light canoes of her people pale into insignificance before the huge ships of commerce carrying products of throbbing industries, to be exchanged for precious cargoes from the Orient.

She had also seen the proud young city laid low by the red flames of destruction, only to rise from its ashes more beautiful and wondrous than ever before. It required no effort of memory to bring it all back, she was familiar with it all.

She usually went barefooted, or nearly so, her scanty garments being composed of cast-off clothing, her wrinkled face bearing a look of sorrow, as if she were ever looking backward upon her fallen and decaying people.

Efforts were frequently made to relieve her condition, the ladies of Seattle at one time providing her with a more comfortable home, which she refused to occupy, returning to her tumble-down cabin. With each succeeding effort to better her condition the lines of her face became more set and rigid, if possible, until finally the task was given over and she was allowed to come and go as she pleased.

Both Angeline and her father embraced the white man's religion, being members of the Catholic Church, and when asked if she were



HOME OF ANGELINE, SEATTLE



INDIAN CANOE

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afraid to die, during her last illness, she replied in her native jargon, "No; Jesus and I are pretty good friends."

She died in Seattle, May 31, 1896, at the advanced age of about eighty-six years, her funeral being largely attended. No effort was made to change her appearance after death and she was laid at rest with the familiar kerchief covering her head. Her coffin was in the shape of a canoe with the "Isick" (paddle) resting at the stern, covered with black broadcloth with silver mountings. The only flowers were those gathered from the forest. She lies buried in Lake View Cemetery beneath the shade of a single tree, the rough-hewn stone at her head giving her name and date of death, sleeping quietly within the confines of the city whose beauty and magnitude have far exceeded the dreams of its founders, the most magnificent monument ever erected to the memory of an Indian chieftain, destined to outlast all time—Seattle.



GRAVE OF PRINCESS ANGELINE

SIWASH ART







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